UNITED
NATIONS

S

Security Council

Distr.
GENERAL

S/2000/30
17 January 2000

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL ON THE UNITED NATIONS ORGANIZATION MISSION IN THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO

I. INTRODUCTION

1. By paragraph 4 of its resolution 1279 (1999) of 30 November 1999, the Security Council decided that the personnel authorized under its resolutions 1258 (1999) and 1273 (1999), including a multidisciplinary staff of personnel in the fields of human rights, humanitarian affairs, public information, medical support, child protection, political affairs and administrative support, which would assist the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, should constitute the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC) until 1 March 2000.

2. By paragraph 8 of that resolution, the Security Council requested the Secretary-General to keep it regularly informed and to report to it as soon as possible on the situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and submit his recommendations on further deployment of United Nations personnel in the country and on their protection.

II. DEVELOPMENTS IN THE PEACE PROCESS

3. The Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement (S/1999/815) provided for the establishment of a Joint Military Commission (JMC) which, together with the United Nations and the Organization of African Unity (OAU), would "be responsible for executing ... peacekeeping operations until the deployment of the United Nations peacekeeping force". The Agreement also provided for the establishment of a ministerial-level Political Committee. At its last meeting in Harare in early December 1999, JMC adopted for approval by the Political Committee papers submitted by its four working groups on the following questions:

(a) Determination of humanitarian corridors, release of hostages, exchange of prisoners of war and working relations with the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC);

(b) Working out mechanisms and budget estimates for disarming, tracking down and quartering of armed groups, as well as procedures for handing over mass killers, perpetrators of crimes against humanity and other war criminals, and disarming all Congolese civilians who are illegally armed;

(c) Drafting mechanisms and procedures for the disengagement of forces;

(d) Working out mechanisms, procedures and a calendar of the withdrawal of foreign forces and the mechanism for monitoring their implementation.

4. JMC adopted a proposal for the peaceful resolution of the situation at Ikela, where Congolese, Namibian and Zimbabwean troops are encircled by rebel forces (see para. 13 below).

5. JMC also addressed the question of the stationing of United Nations liaison officers within Democratic Republic of the Congo territory pursuant to resolution 1258 (1999), by which the Security Council authorized the deployment, as security conditions permitted, of United Nations military liaison officers to the rear military headquarters of the main belligerents in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and to other areas the Secretary-General deemed necessary. In that context, JMC discussed the further deployment of its own regional structures, accompanied by OAU observers, within the Democratic Republic of the Congo. JMC endorsed the reconnaissance and possible dispatch of United Nations military liaison officer teams to Bukavu, Bunia, Kabalo, Kisangani, Bumba, Gemena, Isiro, Kamina, Kalemie, Kindu, Lubumbashi, Mbuji Mayi and Pepa, and requested MONUC to submit proposals for the future reconnaissance and dispatch of teams to Mbandaka, Matadi, Likasi and Dilolo. With some assistance from MONUC, JMC has already deployed regional JMCs and OAU observers at Lisala, Boende and Kabinda.

6. In order to expedite its operations and improve its response to the changing situation on the ground, JMC set up a working group, chaired by Angola, to draft an organizational and operational structure for JMC, together with a budget estimate, and to submit it for adoption by JMC and approval by the Political Committee.

7. The Lusaka Agreement provides for the holding of an inter-Congolese national dialogue leading to national reconciliation. To that end, a neutral facilitator was to be chosen by the parties, and OAU was then to assist the Democratic Republic of the Congo in organizing inter-Congolese political negotiations under the aegis of the facilitator.

8. On 15 December, the Secretary-General of OAU, Salim Ahmed Salim, following consultations with the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the Congolese Rally for Democracy (RCD) (Goma), RCD-mouvement de libération (RCD-ML) and the Movement for the Liberation of the Congo (MLC), announced that the parties had agreed that the former President of Botswana, Sir Ketumile Masire, should assume the role of the neutral facilitator for the inter-Congolese political negotiations. As provided for by the Lusaka Agreement, besides the Congolese parties, the dialogue will include the political opposition and representatives of the forces vives.

III. MILITARY AND SECURITY SITUATION

9. The military and security situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo has deteriorated since my last report, dated 1 November 1999 (S/1999/1116).

10. In November, according to various reports available to the United Nations, the Government launched an offensive from Mbandaka into territory held by MLC in Equateur province, apparently in response to perceived infiltrations on the part of MLC forces into its territory. According to information provided by MLC to United Nations military liaison officers based in Gbadolite, fighting between government troops and MLC in Libanda and Makanza, to the north of Mbandaka, resulted in heavy casualties. However, this information could not be confirmed.

11. Heightened military activity by some of the "armed groups" defined in the Lusaka Agreement has also been reported in eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo. These include the former Rwandan government forces and Interahamwe militia, Burundian rebels and various Mayi-Mayi groups. Rebel sources also say the armed groups have acquired new equipment, including radios and uniforms, and have engaged in planning for military activity in South Kivu and Burundi. Following allegations that the armed forces of the Democratic Republic of the Congo have also been arming, training and supplying these armed groups (see, for example, S/1998/1096), the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo have strongly denied such reports.

12. Reports from South Kivu strongly suggest the danger of large-scale violence among different ethnic groups there. On 29 December 1999, the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo convened a press conference in Kinshasa to announce the alleged burial alive of 15 women in Kivu province by rebels, apparently on suspicion of having been in contact with Mayi-Mayi forces. The rebels have denied the accusation. The Government has appealed to the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights to investigate the alleged atrocity, and Congolese women's groups demonstrated for several days in protest in this connection outside MONUC headquarters in Kinshasa. An alleged massacre of 23 women and three children was also reported near the town of Kalima, north-east of Kindu, allegedly carried out by rebels on 14 December. The victims were accused of complicity with the Mayi-Mayi (see sect. VII below).

13. A force of about 700 Congolese, Namibian and Zimbabwean troops has been encircled at Ikela by rebel forces and has been running short of supplies. Pursuant to a decision made by JMC at its December meeting in Harare, MONUC has been participating in an effort led by the interim Chairman of JMC, Brigadier General Timothy J. Kazembe of Zambia, to achieve a peaceful resolution of the situation. However, MONUC has also received reports indicating that a military solution is being pursued to relieve the encircled troops.

IV. ACTION TAKEN BY THE UNITED NATIONS

14. On 11 December 1999, my Special Representative, Kamel Morjane (Tunisia), assumed his duties in Kinshasa. On the same day, he met with the United States Ambassador to the United Nations, Richard Holbrooke, who was visiting the

Democratic Republic of the Congo as part of his tour of the subregion. Mr. Morjane has also met with President Kabila and other senior officials.

15. The difficulties experienced by the preliminary United Nations deployment in the Democratic Republic of the Congo in positioning military liaison officers at the rear military headquarters of the belligerents and other key locations are described in my last report (S/1999/1116, paras. 18-20). They related primarily to the need to secure all the necessary guarantees of security and freedom of movement for the operations of the technical survey team dispatched to the Democratic Republic of the Congo to inspect the locations at which it was proposed to deploy United Nations personnel and to assess the military, political, logistics and infrastructure situation there. Civilian staff experts in child protection, humanitarian affairs and public information also accompanied the technical survey team.

16. In order to help overcome these difficulties, the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for the peace process in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Moustapha Niasse, visited Kinshasa from 3 to 10 November and raised the issue with President Kabila. Following his visit, the technical survey team has been able to visit seven locations in rebel-held territory and one in Government-held territory. Teams of United Nations military liaison officers have since been positioned at the following eight locations: Gbadolite, Goma, Kananga, Kindu, Gemena, Isiro, Lisala and Boende, and it is intended to position a team at Kabinda later in January. However, proposed visits to important locations such as Mbuji Mayi, Mbandaka, Lubumbashi and Matadi have yet to be approved by the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. RCD (Goma) has insisted that United Nations personnel be positioned at additional locations on Government-held territory in order to ensure a balanced deployment. The number of United Nations military liaison officers currently deployed in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and in the capitals of the belligerent parties and elsewhere in the subregion is 79 (see annex).

17. On the basis of the information sent back from their deployment locations by the teams of military liaison officers and data available in the capitals of the surrounding countries and in Kinshasa, MONUC has built up a picture of the military, logistical and humanitarian situation of many of the locations considered important to United Nations deployment. Though this picture is incomplete and much work remains to be done in order to assemble all the necessary information, it is in many respects quite detailed. The concept of operations presented below is based on the partial data gathered so far.

V. RELATIONS WITH OAU, JMC AND THE PARTIES

18. As was pointed out in my report of 1 November 1999, the proper implementation of the Lusaka Agreement requires very close coordination and cooperation between the United Nations, the parties, JMC and OAU. The United Nations, at Headquarters and through MONUC, has continued to do everything possible within its mandate and resources to develop this coordination and cooperation. MONUC provides substantial assistance to JMC on a routine basis.

19. Early in November, MONUC deployed two military liaison officers at Addis Ababa in order to improve links between the United Nations and OAU. MONUC officers provided training to the OAU observers deployed by JMC to serve with the regional offices of JMC at Boende, Lisala and Kabinda, and provided substantial assistance in their deployment to those locations. The United Nations officers deployed in Lusaka to ensure liaison with JMC have been tasked to assist in the establishment of a 24-hour operations room to enable JMC to receive information from its teams in the field. The co-location of United Nations military liaison officer teams with the regional JMCs is improving the flow of information to JMC headquarters in Lusaka.

20. On 22 December 1999, I wrote to the current Chairman of OAU and the Secretary-General of OAU to point out the importance and urgency of establishing JMC as a standing body at the earliest possible time. The Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations wrote at that time to the Ministers of Defence and Foreign Affairs of the signatory countries stating MONUC's readiness to deploy to sites within the Democratic Republic of the Congo pursuant to resolution 1258 (1999) and requesting their cooperation to that end.

21. In response to an invitation issued by the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, the Assistant Secretary-General of OAU, Said Djinnit, and General Rachid Lallali, the Chairman of JMC, visited United Nations Headquarters on 12 January for consultations. The object of the discussions was to identify further ways in which the United Nations could assist JMC to establish itself as a permanent structure on a fully operational basis.

22. Mr. Djinnit and General Lallali stressed their willingness to work closely with the United Nations and with MONUC but also described the severe constraints imposed on them by the shortage of resources. Despite the pledges received from a number of donors, JMC lacked the funds necessary to carry out effectively the tasks required of it under the Lusaka Agreement. They appealed for further assistance from the international community. For its part, MONUC will continue to provide technical assistance to JMC and OAU observers deployed with the regional JMC structures within the Democratic Republic of the Congo and to explore ways to improve the functioning of JMC by integrating its tasks, including command and control and information flow, with those of MONUC.

23. In order to assist JMC to assume its tasks under the Lusaka Agreement, MONUC is prepared to deploy additional military officers to support its activities. The officers would be located initially in Lusaka but would accompany JMC to its eventual headquarters location in Kinshasa. They would assist in the analysis of information provided by the military observers.

VI. HUMANITARIAN SITUATION

24. There are some 960,000 internally displaced persons in eight of the 11 provinces of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and over 300,000 refugees from six of its nine neighbouring countries. Recent humanitarian assessments reveal that over 2.1 million people (internally displaced persons, refugees, urban vulnerable) or 4.3 per cent of the population of the Democratic Republic of the Congo face critical food insecurity. Another 8.4 million (mostly urban

populations and farmers in the proximity of the frontline), or 17 per cent of the population, face moderate but rapidly growing food insecurity.

25. The current rigid monetary policies pursued by the Government continue to impede traditional commercial exchange and the import of foodstuffs. Prohibitive transport costs caused by inflation and oil shortages have dramatically driven up staple food prices. Major food shortages are reported in urban areas. With agricultural produce unable to reach markets in recent weeks, owing to fighting in food producing areas, the situation has worsened; it is compounded by impassable roads and the onset of the rainy season.

26. The official exchange rate set by the Government of 4.5 CFA francs to the United States dollar imposes very heavy costs on MONUC and the United Nations agencies operating in Kinshasa, since the actual rate of exchange is some 28 CFA francs to the dollar. The costs imposed by this policy have led some agencies to consider suspending operations in the country.

27. A recent nutritional survey in Bas-Congo in western Democratic Republic of the Congo revealed high levels of chronic and acute malnutrition in children under five, which is particularly alarming given that Bas-Congo is traditionally the country's breadbasket and a major supply source for Kinshasa.

28. The World Food Programme issued a press release in December 1999 announcing that while access had improved to some war-affected populations, aid agencies were struggling to reach the country's interior and unless new funds were made available immediately, 350,000 people living in precarious circumstances would struggle to survive.

29. A major improvement in funding and resources is needed to address the humanitarian needs in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The United Nations Consolidated Appeal for 2000 was launched at Geneva in December 1999, requesting $71.3 million. The 1999 Consolidated Appeal for $38.6 million had only a 17-per-cent response rate, making it impossible to provide the necessary life-saving interventions.

30. Recent exceptional floods and river overflows in Kinshasa created an additional group of approximately 9,000 vulnerable families in several areas of the capital city. The Governments of Belgium, France, Japan, the United States of America, Canada and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the European Community Humanitarian Office and United Nations agencies contributed over $500,000 to address immediate humanitarian needs.

VII. HUMAN RIGHTS

31. During the period under review, the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, on 17 December 1999, freed 156 political prisoners, some of whom had been held without trial for months. The majority were activists of the Unified Lumumbiste Party (PALU) or of the Union for Democracy and Social Progress (UDPS).

32. On the occasion of the fifty-first anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (10 December 1999), the Government decided to declare a moratorium on capital sentences handed down by the Military Court of Justice (Cour d'ordre militaire). It has to be recalled that some 100 individuals were executed in 1999, following capital verdicts pronounced by that Court, whose statute prohibits any appeal.

33. A seminar organized in Kinshasa by the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, with a view to facilitating the adoption of a national plan of action for the protection and promotion of human rights was held, from 8 to 10 December 1999. Some 100 participants, including government officials and representatives of civil society, attended the seminar. The national plan, which was adopted unanimously, set up priorities for the period 2000-2002 in the fields of rule of law, administration of justice, human rights education and the promotion of economic, social and cultural rights.

34. Despite the above-mentioned positive developments, the human rights situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo remains a matter of serious concern. Arbitrary arrests and detentions, torture and restrictions imposed on the right to freedom of expression and opinion continue to be reported.

35. In mid November, 15 Congolese women were allegedly buried alive in Mwenga, South Kivu province, currently under the control of RCD. This act has been attributed to Rwandese soldiers. According to a Congolese non-governmental organization, which released the names of 14 of the victims, the women were accused of providing support to Mayi-Mayi warriors fighting against RCD forces.

36. The Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo expressed its great concern over the incident and addressed a letter to the High Commissioner for Human Rights, requesting an international inquiry and a strong condemnation by the international community. RCD (Goma) has reportedly launched its own inquiry into the allegations.

37. As provided for in the MONUC mandate, a first group of human rights officers will shortly be deployed in the Democratic Republic of the Congo in order to address the current precarious human rights situation.

VIII. CHILD PROTECTION

38. Children in the Democratic Republic of the Congo have been victimized through displacement (the majority of the displaced are children and women), separation from and loss of families, physical injuries, and exposure to chronic violence and forced recruitment into fighting forces. Thousands serve as combatants with the various fighting forces. Unaccompanied minors have been reported in large numbers in Kivu, Kasai and Orientale provinces, among other areas.

39. Although children remain extremely vulnerable, the response to the 1999 Consolidated Inter-agency Appeal has been poor. The recruitment of child soldiers continues, especially in the east of the country. A Forum on the

Demobilization of Child Soldiers and the Protection of Human Rights was organized on 10 December 1999 by the Congolese Ministry of Human Rights, supported by UNICEF. This step, together with the release of political prisoners mentioned above, has been viewed very positively.

40. To ensure that the lives of children are protected, it will be necessary to act before the fragile Ceasefire Agreement further erodes. With civilian child protection personnel authorized under resolution 1279 (1999) in place, MONUC could commence collecting data on child combatants and other child protection concerns. It could also assist the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and United Nations agencies in putting together a national plan for the demobilization of child soldiers and bring to the attention of JMC violations of children's rights by the various armed forces operating within the Democratic Republic of the Congo. These activities would require the deployment of further civilian child protection officers, along with the necessary support personnel and equipment, alongside military liaison officers in various locations within the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

41. Their main tasks would include ensuring a comprehensive approach to child protection throughout all stages of the making and consolidation of peace and complementing the work of the UNICEF country office and its programme of cooperation. This would involve, inter alia, ensuring that all personnel involved in United Nations peacemaking, peacekeeping and peace-building activities receive appropriate training on the protection and rights of children.

IX. DISARMAMENT AND DEMOBILIZATION

42. In July 1997, the Government initiated activities aimed at the demobilization and rehabilitation of approximately 75,000 soldiers of the former Forces armées zaïroises (FAZ). In response to the Government's request, the World Bank allocated a grant from its Post-Conflict Fund in the amount of $700,000 to assist the Government in programme preparation. Simultaneously, UNICEF engaged in the demobilization and reintegration of ex-child soldiers from former government forces, first on a limited scale in Bukavu and Goma, later as a concerted national effort. The resumption of hostilities in August 1998 effectively delayed both efforts.

43. The Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement allowed both activities to move forward, through, inter alia, the Forum on the Demobilization of Child Soldiers, mentioned in paragraph 39 above. At the same time, the Government and the World Bank restructured the grant in view of the changed circumstances. The demobilization and reintegration of former combatants is now being planned in two phases. The first phase would aim at the demobilization and reintegration of special vulnerable groups (children, the handicapped, the chronically ill, the aged etc.). The second phase would be linked to the full implementation of the Lusaka Agreement and the reform of all armed forces, as envisaged in chapter 10 of the Lusaka Agreement, and would aim at the demobilization and reintegration of combatants not retained in the unified army. Phase II would also address the reintegration needs of members of armed groups to be demobilized and disarmed under chapter 9 of the Lusaka Agreement.

44. Preparation for the first phase is about to commence and will be undertaken as a joint effort between the Government and the international community. The key ministries involved include Human Rights, National Defence and Social Affairs. Implementation of the grant will be managed by the International Labour Organization in close collaboration with the World Bank, UNICEF, the United Nations Development Programme, the World Health Organization and other United Nations agencies.

Conditions for demobilization

45. The first phase of demobilization would require cooperation from all belligerent parties for the transparent and efficient identification and demobilization of the special target groups, the freedom of movement of ex-combatants to their selected community of reintegration, and a stable security situation. The second phase would depend on the unification of forces as per the Lusaka Agreement, military restructuring under a unified command, the completion of a transparent identification and registration process, and the successful implementation of chapter 9 of the Lusaka Agreement on the disarmament of armed groups. The attainment of these objectives will, of course, depend not only on the full commitment of all the parties to carrying out the Lusaka Agreement but also on the agreement by the armed groups themselves to be disarmed and demobilized. Much work remains to be done in this respect.

X. NEXT STEPS

46. In my 1 November 1999 report, I sought from the Security Council prior authorization to deploy up to 500 military observers, with the necessary support and protection. I pointed out that, in order to be effective, the military observers would require protection and considerable logistical support, including vehicles and communications, as well as additional air assets to ensure their deployment, supply, rotation and, if necessary, extraction. A medical unit should also be deployed in support of the mission.

47. Pursuant to resolution 1279 (1999), I initiated the administrative steps necessary for the equipping of up to 500 United Nations military observers with a view to facilitating future rapid United Nations deployments as authorized by the Council.

48. I had indicated in my report of 15 July (S/1999/790) that the deployment of military observers, should the Council so decide, would constitute the second phase of United Nations involvement in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, security and other conditions permitting. In my report of 1 November 1999 (S/1999/1116) I also envisaged, subject to further progress in the peace process, reverting to the Council with a further report containing recommendations and a proposed mandate and concept of operations for an enlarged United Nations deployment.

49. It must be said that, while progress has been made in the implementation of the Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement, some setbacks have unfortunately been registered. In order to enable MONUC to perform all the tasks required of it by

the Security Council, it is essential that the necessary security and real freedom of movement for United Nations and OAU personnel be assured. The fighting that has continued in some parts of the country and the obstacles and delays encountered in receiving the necessary clearances still constitute problems in that regard.

50. With heavy fighting around Mbandaka in Equateur province and indications that the armed groups identified in the Lusaka Agreement have received new arms and training, and given the difficulties encountered by MONUC in its efforts to deploy across the country, there appears to be a need for the renewed commitment of the parties to the Agreement they signed in Lusaka. In this context, the efforts made and initiatives taken by important regional actors should be noted. President Chiluba and President Bouteflika have done much to move the process forward, and President Mbeki has called for the urgent convening of a summit meeting aimed at ensuring the speedy implementation of the Lusaka Agreement, an initiative which I support.

51. With the renewed commitment of the parties to the Lusaka Agreement, fully supported by the international community, diplomatic activity may yet succeed in resolving the crisis. The parties should know - and the recent fighting has furnished fresh evidence of this - that there is no military solution to the conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The people of that country, and of the other belligerent States, need peace in order to channel their energies towards development. It is therefore incumbent on the United Nations to continue to do its utmost to support efforts for peace, including the deployment of a peacekeeping operation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

Potential for action by the United Nations

52. The signatories of the Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement had in mind a specific set of tasks for the United Nations. If the Agreement is to be carried out as signed, the formidable tasks expected of the United Nations will need to be carefully evaluated. In particular, it will be necessary to reflect on the question of the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of the armed groups in order to develop a realistic plan of action.

53. The United Nations can potentially play an important role if it receives the necessary mandate and resources. Under such conditions, it will certainly be necessary to envisage a large-scale United Nations peacekeeping operation. Its main objectives would be as follows:

(a) To assist the belligerents to complete the disengagement and withdrawal of their forces in reasonably secure conditions;

(b) To provide security for the operations of United Nations military personnel;

(c) To contribute to the eventual disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of former combatants, including the armed groups identified in the Lusaka Agreement.

54. In order to execute such a programme, a clear political agreement on the part of all concerned is necessary. As noted above, the World Bank has already commenced work on elements of a demobilization and reintegration plan.

55. As was already foreseen, the political context, as well as the political, military and logistical constraints, justify a step-by-step approach adapted to the situation.

Logistical situation

56. The road system throughout the country is in extremely poor condition, with long impassable stretches and broken bridges. Road journeys between cities can be undertaken only with great difficulty and can last days or even weeks, with no certainty of success. Conditions are even more difficult during the rainy season, which is always prevalent in one part of the country or another.

57. The railway system is patchy, dilapidated and serves only a few routes. Both rolling stock and rails are reported to be in very poor condition. Many routes have become unusable owing to the effects of war and lack of maintenance, while services on those lines that are still open are underfunded, slow and of limited capacity.

58. The main surface transport medium in the Democratic Republic of the Congo is the extensive system of inland waterways, based on the River Congo and its tributaries. River barges vary in size, with carrying capacity of up to 600 tons. Barges can travel in groups of up to five or six vessels pushed by a single tug, at a rate of five to eight knots. Travel time on one of the shorter routes, from Kinshasa to Mbandaka, was estimated at 10 to 20 days, depending on conditions, though it is believed possible to reach Kisangani from Kinshasa in only 10 days if security is guaranteed. There appears to be no restriction on the commodities that can be carried. However, at the present time the River Congo is open only as far as Mbandaka because of the fighting in Equateur Province.

59. As a result of the difficulties associated with the surface transport infrastructure, air transport has become the most important means of travel within the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Usable airfields are located in all the major population centres. However, navigational aids are not widely available, and aviation fuel can be obtained commercially only at Kinshasa.

Next stage of deployment: concept of operations

60. The next stage of MONUC's deployment is based on the following assumptions:

(a) The parties will respect and uphold the Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement and the relevant Security Council resolutions;

(b) The JMC, with support from MONUC, will develop a valid plan for the disengagement of the parties' armed forces and their redeployment to assembly areas or JMC-approved defensive positions;

(c) The parties will be committed to contributing to the security of United Nations personnel but may not be entirely able to do so.

61. MONUC will also have to complete the reconnaissance of the intended deployment locations and the positioning of its teams in the rear military headquarters, as stipulated by the Council in resolution 1258 (1999).

62. Even given the willingness of the parties to provide security for MONUC personnel, the levels of insecurity, the degraded infrastructure and the difficult terrain in the country will require the deployment of formed units to protect military observers and civilian staff and to facilitate their activities. For this purpose, it is envisaged that a total force of 5,537 officers and men will be required.

63. This force will be deployed in four reinforced protected infantry battalion groups numbering a total of 3,400 troops. In order to make optimum use of the extensive inland waterway system, the force will also include two marine companies of 150 troops each, with four boats per company. As indicated in earlier reports, there will be 500 military observers. The force headquarters unit will comprise 95 officers, and the four sector headquarters will be staffed by 40 officers each. The force will also need two level II medical units (35 staff each), as well as units responsible for communications, air operations, movement control and aviation.

64. Even assuming the use of the inland waterways, it is envisaged that, in view of the poor state of the roads and the size of the country, MONUC will need very substantial aviation assets, including light and medium helicopters and fixed-wing aircraft. The fixed-wing aircraft will have to fly hundreds of sorties to deploy and sustain the military units.

65. The main military tasks of the expanded MONUC will be:

(a) To establish contacts and maintain continuous liaison at the field headquarters of all the parties' military forces and with the Joint Military Commission;

(b) To assist the parties in developing modalities for the implementation of the Agreement through the collection and verification of military information on the parties' forces and to develop plans to maintain the cessation of hostilities, disengage the parties' forces, and redeploy the forces to defensive positions or assembly areas;

(c) To facilitate, monitor and report on the cessation of hostilities;

(d) In cooperation with the Joint Military Commission, to investigate violations of the Ceasefire Agreement;

(e) To verify the disengagement of the parties' forces;

(f) In cooperation with the International Committee of the Red Cross, to facilitate the release of prisoners of war and military captives as necessary;

(g) To supervise and verify the redeployment of the parties' forces to defensive positions or administrative assembly areas;

(h) Within its capabilities, to facilitate humanitarian operations;

(i) To support the operations of United Nations civilian staff;

(j) To protect United Nations personnel, facilities, installations and equipment;

(k) To prepare for the next phase of United Nations deployment.

66. The United Nations operation described above represents the minimum strength required for the tasks envisaged at this time. Additional tasks - including facilitating the eventual disarmament and demobilization of armed groups and monitoring and verifying the withdrawal of foreign forces - will require the approval of the Council for a larger operation. An operation of the size currently envisaged will permit United Nations personnel to operate within the vicinity of the battalions only if the parties can guarantee their security.

67. It should be understood that United Nations formed units would not serve as an interposition force nor would they be expected to extract military observers or civilian personnel by force. They would not have the capacity to protect the civilian population from armed attack. MONUC military units would be able to escort humanitarian assistance convoys only within the limits of their means and under favourable security conditions.

68. It is envisaged to locate the battalions near the current or potential areas of operation of the military observers and civilian personnel. Those locations would include Mbandaka, Kisangani and Mbuji Mayi. The fourth location should be in the south-east of the country at a site yet to be surveyed, probably in territory controlled by the rebels. Any battalion located in that part of the country would need to use the logistical facilities of Lubumbashi.

69. The military observers would establish regular contacts with their counterparts in the armed forces of the parties and would provide most of the information on their positions and movements. It is envisaged that the United Nations observers would at all times operate under the protection of the parties and would conduct frequent risk assessments.

70. The task of the marine units would be to observe, monitor and verify the activities of the parties' military forces on the rivers and waterways of the country, and to facilitate movement by water of United Nations personnel, under the protection of the parties.

71. As the use of landmines has been a feature of the conflict in certain areas of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, a mine action capacity would be established as part of the expanded MONUC. In addition to mine clearance and unexploded ordnance disposal specialists, who should be deployed in the reinforced battalions in order to meet their operational needs, a mine action office should be set up within the Mission. Aimed at developing a planning capacity in the field of mine action, its primary objective would be to assess

the real scope of the landmine and unexploded ordnance issue by establishing a mine information system. It would also act as the mission coordinator for mine action activities to be implemented by MONUC, non-governmental organizations, and United Nations and non-United Nations humanitarian agencies operating in country. In this connection, it would particularly focus on mine/unexploded ordnance awareness training for MONUC personnel. Finally, once the real situation had been assessed, the mine action office would contribute to developing a strategy to meet any short, medium and long-term requirements for mine/unexploded ordnance action in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

72. Along with the increase in its military activities, the expanded United Nations mission would also be expected to assume enhanced responsibilities in the fields of humanitarian assistance, human rights monitoring, and the protection of children, including child soldiers. The expanded mission should therefore be staffed and equipped accordingly. To ensure that its role would be properly understood by the Government and people of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and in order to disseminate information concerning that role, the mission would need to be equipped with an adequate public information component, including radio stations. A status-of-forces agreement would have to be drawn up with the Government, reflecting the mission's mandate and activities.

73. Progress thereafter would depend on the ability of the parties to abide by the terms of the Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement, including the disengagement of their forces along confrontation lines. If United Nations personnel are enabled to perform their mandated functions under conditions of adequate security and freedom of movement, I would then be in a position to consider recommending to the Council the next phase, which would involve the deployment of a larger United Nations peacekeeping operation to assist the parties in carrying out the remaining provisions of the Agreement.

74. It is evident that the problem of the armed groups, including the former Rwandan government forces and Interahamwe militia, is a key factor in the conflict in the subregion, since it undermines the security of all the States concerned. It is essential to resolve this question in order to establish a lasting peace. A plan of action must be devised to facilitate the comprehensive disarmament, demobilization and, as required, reintegration process for the armed groups.

75. In order to pursue the full implementation of the Lusaka Agreement, it also appears necessary to make progress in the inter-Congolese dialogue to be undertaken under the auspices of the neutral facilitator, Sir Ketumile Masire.

76. It is vital to create the conditions for a lasting peace in the subregion based on the implementation of the Lusaka Agreement. The elements of such a peace would eventually include the security of borders of the States concerned, their territorial integrity, and their full enjoyment of their natural resources. In order to help achieve these objectives, it will be important to convene, at the appropriate time, a regional conference on security and stability.

XI. FINANCIAL ASPECTS

77. Pursuant to Security Council resolutions 1258 (1999), 1273 (1999) and 1279 (1999), I have obtained from the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions commitment authorities totalling $41.0 million for the United Nations preliminary deployment in the Congo subregion and for the establishment and maintenance of MONUC for the period from 6 August 1999 to 1 March 2000, inclusive of funds necessary for the equipping of 500 military observers and additional 100 civilian support personnel expected to be deployed subject to a further decision by the Council. To ensure that the Mission is provided with resources to fulfil its mandate, I intend to seek assessment of these requirements from the General Assembly during its resumed fifty-fourth session.

78. Should the Council approve my recommendation contained in paragraph 83 below, I shall inform the Council of the related requirements and shall seek additional resources from the General Assembly accordingly.

79. As at 31 December 1999, the total outstanding assessed contributions for all peacekeeping operations amounted to $1,482.1 million.

XII. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

80. The deployment of additional United Nations military personnel should contribute to restoring and maintaining momentum for the implementation of the Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement. In this connection, the signatories bear a crucial responsibility for ensuring the implementation of the Agreement. It is on the basis of their renewed and strengthened commitment to the Agreement they have signed that the international community will be ready to lend its full support and allocate the significant resources that will be required. In this context, no new military offensives should be launched, the security and freedom of movement of United Nations personnel should be guaranteed, and the spreading of hostile propaganda, especially incitements to attack unarmed civilians, should cease.

81. The parties can also demonstrate their full commitment to their Agreement by making use of the modalities contained in it. In this regard, JMC's initiative to resolve the encirclement at Ikela is encouraging. I applaud the action taken in this context by the Government of Zambia, and particularly by the interim JMC Chairman, Brigadier General Timothy Kazembe, and wish them success. In view of its essential role, the Joint Military Commission, which is a key instrument, must very soon be established on a permanent basis, able to react swiftly to events and provide credible and authoritative decisions. Efforts to integrate its activities with those of MONUC should continue.

82. The inter-Congolese dialogue to be conducted under the auspices of the neutral facilitator, with the assistance of OAU, is an indispensable step towards national reconciliation and lasting peace and stability in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The designation of Sir Ketumile Masire as the neutral facilitator for the inter-Congolese dialogue has elevated the prospect that the other main pillar of the Lusaka peace process will now be implemented,

with the assistance of OAU. The United Nations is committed to cooperating with OAU in supporting the facilitator.

83. The regional efforts and initiatives undertaken in support of the peace process, including those by Heads of State in the region, are to be commended. I also welcome the initiative of the Government of the United States, President of the Security Council for the month of January 2000, in encouraging the belligerent parties to recommit themselves to the Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement. Subject to agreement by the parties to taking the steps outlined above, I recommend the deployment of four reinforced protected infantry battalion groups, accompanied by up to 500 military observers, two marine companies and the supporting military personnel and equipment, and the additional civilian personnel required, as described in paragraphs 62 to 72 above. I will provide the Council as soon as possible with a statement of the estimated cost implications of these proposals (in an addendum to the present report).

84. Until the full deployment of a United Nations force, the role of the Joint Military Commission will remain crucial. In order to permit JMC to fulfil its functions under the Lusaka Agreement, I reiterate my appeal to donors to provide it with the resources, in funding or in kind, to support its operations.

85. In my report of 15 July 1999 (S/1999/790, para. 15), I stated that, in order to be effective, any United Nations peacekeeping mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, whatever its mandate, would have to be large and expensive. It would require the deployment of thousands of international troops and civilian personnel. It would face tremendous difficulties, and would be beset by risks. Deployment would be slow. This assessment has been amply borne out by the information provided so far by MONUC personnel, particularly on the military and logistical situation in the country. On that basis, it might be added that the deployment of a MONUC peacekeeping operation will also create inflated expectations that might well be unrealistic.

86. Nevertheless, it cannot be too often repeated that the Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement remains the best hope for the resolution of the conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and, for the time being, the only prospect of achieving it. This month will provide the leaders of the countries concerned with a unique opportunity to demonstrate their commitment to the Agreement and, eventually, to peace and stability in the Central African subregion.

87. Lastly, I take this opportunity to wish my Special Representative, Kamel Morjane, every success in his challenging assignment, and to express to the military and civilian officers of MONUC my deepest appreciation for the efforts they have made over the past few months, often under extremely trying circumstances, to carry out the resolutions of the Security Council.

Annex

United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo: contributions as at 12 January 2000

	Military liaison	Troops	Civilian police observers	Total
Algeria	7	--	--	7
Bangladesh	4	--	--	4
Benin	4	--	--	4
Bolivia	1	--	--	1
Canada	1	--	--	1
Egypt	3	--	--	3
France	3	--	--	3
Ghana	4	--	--	4
India	5	--	--	5
Italy	1	--	--	1
Kenya	1	--	--	1
Libyan Arab Jamahiriya	1	--	--	1
Mali	2	--	--	2
Nepal	2	--	--	2
Pakistan	8	--	--	8
Poland	1	--	--	1
Romania	5	--	--	5
Russian Federation	3	--	--	3
Senegal	5	--	--	5
South Africa	1	--	--	1
Sweden	1	--	--	1
United Republic of Tanzania	2	--	--	2
United Kingdom	6	--	--	6
Uruguay	4	--	--	4
Zambia	4	--	--	4
Total	79	--	--	79

Map No. 4121 Rev. 1 UNITED NATIONS
January 2000

Department of Public Information
Cartographic Section